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UNCLAS OTTAWA 002617

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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST: SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS  
DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION

REF: SECSTATE 158875

1. (SBU) Poloff delivered reftel demarche to Sarah Fountain-Smith, Director of the Brazil, Southern Cone, and Summit Coordination Office at Foreign Affairs Canada. Fountain-Smith said that Canada takes the summit process very seriously and Peter Boehm, Assistant Deputy Minister for Latin America and the PM's Summit Coordinator will lead the Canadian delegation to Buenos Aires. Canada shares our concern with the pace of negotiations on the declaration but is not prepared to follow our recommendation to look for an alternative to the Declaration. The GOC concern is that in doing so we would simply transfer the problems we are encountering now to the alternate process, and could in the end actually have a worse outcome.

2. (SBU) The GOC, Fountain-Smith says, sees the declaration as the framework for the plan of action, and is concerned that shifting the focus away from it would leave any plan of action without the firm political support it needs to be successful. She also sees many positive items in the declaration, e.g. on indigenous rights, that could drop out altogether if an alternate path was pursued. Fountain-Smith believes that while the negotiations are slow, there is still time to accelerate the process next week, hopefully through the formation of working groups of some sort, to finally achieve the right outcome. She thought that anything that breaks the gathering out of plenary and into more functional groups, would be beneficial and Canada will push this with the Argentines. She did concede that if it were clear that things were not going to work we would have to talk again. Fountain-Smith also mentioned that there was cautious optimism that there could be positive language on the FTAA, with the right tone on the IFIs.

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